

## Introduction

The purpose of the Natural Resource and Conservation element is to provide guidance and support through various goals, policies, and actions for conservation efforts that protect and manage the town's natural resources. Conservation of natural resources are evaluated and protected concurrently with open space, historical and cultural significant areas. Therefore, this element is closely linked to the Open Space element as well as the Historical and Cultural elements of this Plan. This Plan includes an inventory of existing natural resources, the threats to these resources, and ways to assure the conservation of these Town assets.

Land protection and land development have a symbiotic relationship with respect to the Town's capability to preserve its natural resources. The Town must generate revenue with which to protect undeveloped lands. Map 1 charts a course for where the Town should preserve large tracts from development along with other areas where the Town should be willing to accept development for the sake of maintaining an acceptable tax rate. Beginning with input from the Economic Development Commission, areas were identified based on the presence of natural resources, future economic development potential, historical growth pattern of the Town, landowners willingness to offer land for preservation, and, the various carrying capacities of existing road systems.

## Natural Resources Inventory

The residents of North Smithfield are the caretakers of 15,600 acres (26.4 square miles) rich in natural resources worthy of protection. Whether it is wildlife, vegetation, wetlands, forests or water resources, the natural features of North Smithfield create a sense of place that is valued by the community. Significant natural resources include surface and groundwater aquifers as a result of glacial outwash.

## Groundwater Water Resources

Groundwater is an important resource as it supplies drinking water for a large percentage of the town's households. North Smithfield has two class GAA groundwater aquifers, the Slatersville and Lower Branch. Groundwater classified GAA are those groundwater resources that are known or presumed to be suitable for drinking water use without treatment and are in one of the two areas described below. Groundwater classified GAA underlies approximately 21% of the state and 32% of North Smithfield. Groundwater classified GAA includes the following:

- The state's major stratified drift aquifers that can serve as a significant source for a public water supply ("groundwater reservoirs") and the critical portion of their recharge area as delineated by DEM
- The wellhead protection area for each public water system community water supply well. Community water supply wells are those that serve resident populations and have at least 15 service connections or serve at least 25 individuals, e.g., municipal wells and wells serving nursing homes, condominiums, mobile home parks, etc.

Map 2 is the Groundwater Aquifer Protection Overlay District from the North Smithfield Zoning Ordinance. This map combined with North Smithfield Zoning Ordinance 6.19 regulates the use and development of land to protect major stratified drift aquifers and their recharge areas (GAA Classification), surface drinking water supplies and their watersheds, community well-head protection areas, and town-owned non-transient, non-community wellhead protection areas (schools).

While much of the town's more intense residential, commercial and industrial development has historically been located over aquifers, ordinances have been put in place specifying permitted uses and non-permitted (possibly contaminating) uses to protect the drinking water of North Smithfield's residents.

### Surface water resources and watersheds

North Smithfield is located within the drainage system of three major Rhode Island rivers. The northern portions of the Town drain into the Branch River which in turn joins the Blackstone River in the northeastern section of Town. In the southwest corner several streams, including those flowing through Primrose Pond, combine to form the headwaters of the Woonasquatucket River. In the eastern section of the community both the Cherry Brook and Crookfall Brook systems flow to the east and into the Blackstone River in Woonsocket.

State Guide Element 162 classifies the various river segments in North Smithfield as follows:

- The Branch River from its confluence with the Clear and Chepachet Rivers to the Slatersville Reservoir is suitable for swimming or fishing. It has recreational open space value, and mill villages are located along its corridor. (Classified as "Recreational Open Space")
- Slatersville Reservoir (both upper and lower) has recreational value and is designated as swimmable and fishable. It has a state boat ramp and fishing club access. Its current condition with respect to contact recreation is, however, marginal due to coliform and metals levels that exceed state standards. The Land Resource and Recovery Landfill Superfund site is located near the Reservoir. (Classified as "Recreational Open Space")<sup>1</sup>
- The Branch River, from the Slatersville Reservoir to its confluence with the Blackstone River at the Blackstone Gorge in the Town of North Smithfield, has scenic and open space value with mill villages located along the river corridor. It is suitable for non-contact recreation. (Classified as "Recreational Multiple Use")
- The Blackstone River from the Blackstone Gorge to the Rhode Island state line is suitable for boating recreation. White-water rafting is occasionally possible in this segment. (Classified as "Recreational Open Space")

- The Blackstone River from the Rhode Island state line to Thundermist Falls in Woonsocket is suitable for boating recreation activities. Mills with historical value are located along the river corridor. (Classified as “Recreational Multiple Use”)
- The Woonsocket Reservoirs and Crookfall Brook and its tributaries are components of a public drinking water supply. The main reservoir, identified as Reservoir No. 3, is in Smithfield and North Smithfield. Crookfall Brook conveys water from Reservoir No. 3 through Reservoir No. 2 to Reservoir No. 1, the terminal reservoir and the water treatment facility. Mill sites, historical resources, and archeological remains can be found along the Crookfall Brook corridor. (Classified as “Water Supply”)

There are four major dams in North Smithfield. Three, located along the Branch River, were originally developed to provide water power for the mills. The fourth is across Crookfall Brook to create Woonsocket Reservoir #3. The maintenance of existing dams is important for water quality. The three dams on the Branch River are maintained by private owners and the dam on Crookfall Brook is maintained by the City of Woonsocket. The dams, particularly those along the Branch River, have served to trap contaminated sediments; a breach could have adverse environmental consequences of statewide significance. RIDEM's Dam Division regulates dam safety in Rhode Island.

### Water Supply Basin

The Blackstone River Watershed drains into two reservoirs located in North Smithfield serving the Woonsocket Water Supply. As shown on Map 3, major portions of the watersheds serving Reservoir #3 and Reservoir #1 of the Woonsocket water supply system are in North Smithfield. The watershed is divided into two sections. The westerly portion drains to Reservoir #3 which straddles the North Smithfield/Smithfield Town line. The easterly section drains directly into Crookfall Brook and Reservoir #1; Reservoir #1 is bisected by the North Smithfield/Lincoln Town line. Risk assessments of the watersheds were undertaken in 2004 by the Department of Health and URI Cooperative Extension. Based on an analysis of existing uses and zoning, the Woonsocket water supplies are “moderately susceptible to contamination”.

The City of Woonsocket owns about 30% of Reservoir #3 watershed, primarily around the reservoir's perimeter. The entire Reservoir #3 watershed in North Smithfield is zoned for single family homes; only a small percentage of potential watershed development has taken place to date.

Because of existing and potential development, the Reservoir #1 watershed is the most critical in terms of hydrologic importance. Development activities in the watershed are constrained to the extent that special measures or restrictions may apply to this important watershed. Water quality is constantly monitored and development activities are constrained for protection from contaminants. Rivers and streams running through the watershed carry storm water drainage and drainage from impervious surfaces such as roadways and parking lots. To protect the groundwater reservoirs and streams, the North Smithfield Zoning Ordinance limits the amount of impervious surface in new development and specifies no impervious surface within 100 feet of a freshwater wetland. In Section 17, the section on Site Plan Review, impervious cover is to be minimized in driveways and parking lots. In Section 18 a low impact design Stormwater Prevention Plan is recommended to minimize surface runoff.

## Minerals and Soils

37% of North Smithfield soils have only moderate limitations for development, 47% have severe constraints due to high water tables, steep slopes, and shallow bedrock or wetland conditions. Increasingly, new development is encountering more demanding sites. Over 3,000 acres have agricultural soils rated as prime or of statewide importance, only 500 acres are in use for agriculture.

Map 4 shows wetlands and hydric soils. Hydric soils have water at or near the surface for significant periods of the year. Development in areas with hydric soils usually is not feasible nor allowed by local, State or Federal wetland regulations without a specific permit granted by RIDEM. Hydric soils cover about 2,250 acres or approximately 14% of North Smithfield. Wetlands are periodically flooded lands occurring between uplands and open water bodies such as lakes, rivers, streams and estuaries. They are important to fish and wildlife habitat, flood protections, erosion control and water quality maintenance. To develop on or near wetlands, permits are required from RIDEM.

In Map 4 and 7, a large percentage of land (40%) in North Smithfield is limited for development because of bedrock and slope constraints or hydric soils. Hydric soils are not suitable for development and are not included in calculating buildable land. Bedrock and slope constraints comprising 19.6% of soils in North Smithfield reduce the amount of suitable land for development. Fortunately, about one third of the soils in North Smithfield are soils with moderate constraints to development (36.9%).

Map 6 shows soils classified as prime farmland and those of statewide importance. Generally, farmlands of statewide importance include those lands that are nearly prime farmland and that economically produce high yields of crops when treated and managed according to modern farming methods.

The Town's abundant groundwater aquifer exists due to the presence of glacial outwash as depicted on Map 5.

## Forest and Trees

Woodlands serve major ecological, hydrological, climatological and aesthetic functions in North Smithfield. North Smithfield's undeveloped areas are made up of small woodlands, wooded swamps, streams which serve as habitat for a diverse group of plant and animal species (see Map 8). With one acre and larger housing sites being used for new development in large portions of the community, a considerable amount of woodland is now located on individual house lots. As can be seen on Map 8, most of the forested area in North Smithfield is in the southern portion and is deciduous forest.

Forest fragmentation due to residential and urban development is of concern in the state as well as in North Smithfield. Fragmentation occurs when contiguous forest land is divided into smaller patches. The division has the potential to change the local water cycles, reduce critical wildlife habitat and foster the growth of invasive plant species.

## Wildlife

The Town's rolling and forested terrain, interspersed with streams, ponds and wetlands, creates habitats for a variety of plant and animal species, both common and rare. These same features help to break up the development pattern and provide varied living environments for residents as well. Small ponds and a variety of deciduous and coniferous trees provide for a diverse habitat of wildlife. But this break in the development pattern also causes fragmentation of habitat. According to the Rhode Island Wildlife Action Plan of 2015 (RI WAP), the primary threat to wildlife habitats is the conversion of land for housing, urban growth, transportation, commercial, industrial, and recreational uses. According to Land Use 2025, it took over 300 years to develop the first 20 percent of the state's land, and only 25 more years to develop another 9 percent. This shift causes breaks in contiguous land for habitats as well as loss of habitat. This fragmentation has a profound effect on wildlife and on species diversity.

Many species of wildlife depend on the forested habitats for their survival. The maturing/aging of the forests and the lack of young forests are changing the wildlife species in Rhode Island. Maturing/aging forests are a benefit to some species of the wildlife because of the abundance of nuts and fruits but this varies year to year. Aging forests also contain dead and fallen trees providing habit for cavity-nesting animals and those that need dead wood to survive. The lack of young trees and plants and the inhibition of understory growth affect the nesting and feeding habits of other wildlife.

## Conservation and Protection

Although North Smithfield's scenic resources do not run to the unusual and dramatic, there are many man-made and natural landscapes which add to the attractiveness of the community. Many of the natural resources such as Todd's Pond or the Blackstone River Gorge and locally-known cobble rock (pictured here) are obscured from public view due to private ownership or limited access. Others are not; the view of the farms and barns on Woonsocket Hill Road as one travels north on Route 146 is both dramatic and memorable. Cedar Swamp Conservation Area is town-owned and managed by the North Smithfield Conservation Commission, consists of 69.5 acres of freshwater wetlands off route 146 and Greenville Rd. Walks through the Audubon Property off the Providence Pike take one into a seemingly virgin area of streams, ponds, fields and woods that could pass for an isolated section of northern New England. These are but a few of North Smithfield's "highly scenic" resources. Fortunately, as is being pointed out through the efforts of the Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor Commission and Scenic Rhode Island, Rhode Islanders are learning that there are untapped scenic resources readily at hand to be enjoyed.



## Aquifer Protection

One could argue that of all the natural resources, groundwater might be most important which is why this section contains more actions than previous sections. The following will be implemented for the protection of the Slatersville and Branch River Aquifers and other lesser groundwater reservoirs and recharge areas which have potentials for public water supply.

- Groundwater Overlay Zoning

The Town responded to the 1992 Comprehensive Plan requirement for groundwater protection by adopting Section 6-19 of the Zoning Ordinance titled “Regulation of Groundwater Aquifer Zones, Groundwater Recharge Areas, Wellhead Protection Areas and Water Supply Basin”. As recommended by the Comprehensive Plan, the regulations dictating uses over these resources are more stringent than in the underlying districts. The current Overlay language will be reviewed for possible expansion of the list of prohibited uses and the Overlay map will be revised to clearly show all protection zones including surface water supply basins. More specifically, it will prohibit excessive water drawdown for non-municipal uses. More resources will be spent on enforcement of the Ordinance and property owner education.

There is merit to carving out areas of the overlay within existing industrial areas to support expansion in those areas. This is particularly true in pockets where water quality has been degraded historically such that it would never be approved for drinking water

- Post-Construction Storm Water Control Ordinance

North Smithfield recently completed, in 2017, adoptions of its Post-Construction Storm Water Control Ordinance requiring proper provisions for the protection of soil surfaces and after construction is in conformance with State law.

- Soil and Earth Removal Ordinance

The Soil and Earth Removal Ordinance does not apply to several sand and gravel operation which were in operation prior to the enactment of the Ordinance. One, for example, is located between the Slatersville Reservoir and the Slatersville groundwater reservoir. Since critical resources of the Town and State may be at risk, the Town should reexamine present regulations about the underlying water resources and adjacent wetland and surface waters and the restoration of the land in a manner which will provide long-term protection.

- Underground Storage Tanks

State regulations on the installation, management and testing of underground storage tanks are administered by RIDEM. Failed tanks can impact individual wells, large aquifers, streams and waterbodies. The Town will insist on enforcement of these regulations in critical water resource areas.

- Hazardous and Emergency Spill Response

Through its Emergency Management Agency, the Town continues to participate with nine other Northern Rhode Island communities in a regional compact covering hazardous and emergency spill responses. Via the October 2004 *Multi-Hazard Mitigation Strategy*, there is now better coordination amongst the various public safety organizations in and around North Smithfield and a comprehensive inventory of the equipment that may be used to deal with

hazards and emergency spills. The March 2004 *Stormwater Management Program Plan*, in response to RIPDES Stormwater Phase II Regulations illustrates all outfalls such that, in an emergency, the Town's rivers and streams can be better protected by the targeting of critical outfall locations.

## Watershed Protection

Two watersheds are of prime importance. They include those relating to the Slatersville Reservoirs and Woonsocket Water Supply Reservoirs #1 and #3. The Town will use the resources of the EPA and RIDEM as well as the Northern Rhode Island Conservation District to help protect these areas. Other key organizations are the Watershed Councils. The Woonasquatucket and Blackstone River Watershed Associations are non-profit organizations, empowered by the Rhode Island Rivers Council, to restore and improve the communities within their respective watersheds. North Smithfield has worked extensively with the Woonasquatucket Council in 2004 on its mapping project.

- Reservoir Protection

Various development regulations will be strongly enforced where there is the potential to degrade the Slatersville and Woonsocket Reservoirs. In some cases, such as the Town's water supply well near the Slatersville Reservoirs, the aquifer is being recharged, in part, by surface water from the Reservoir. The Town will work cooperatively with the City of Woonsocket as part of a regional protection strategy. Where possible, North Smithfield's program for conservation area protection, as presented in the Open Space and Recreation Plan Element, will be coordinated with the land holdings, both existing and proposed, of the City of Woonsocket. North Smithfield will encourage strong upstream protection of both surface and groundwater resources by the Town of Burrillville.

## Protect Farms, Forests and Open Space

In North Smithfield the number one protection of farms, forest and open spaces is Rhode Island Law (44-27) the Farm, Forest, Open Space Act (FFOS). This law allows landowners of farm, forest or open space, to conserve their property for themselves and their future generations. Properties qualified for the FFOS program are assessed according to their current use instead of the value of the land if redeveloped. To qualify as a farm, the land must have more than 5 acres of agricultural land, woodlands and wetlands. Farmers who depend on their farms for sustenance and have very limited income also qualify for this tax benefit.

Open space qualification is ten acres or more of undeveloped land (excluding the house site). Open space is where undeveloped land serves to enhance agricultural values, or land in its natural state that conserves forests, enhances wildlife habitat, or protects ecosystem health.

## Farms

Proposals for the conservation of significant natural areas are contained in the Open Space and Recreation Element. The array of regulatory controls discussed in this Natural Resource Element will be applied with equal vigor to the protection of significant natural resources. Of special

importance is the inclusion in Town regulations of provisions for the review of development applications by all concerned Town boards. The regulations will be amended, as necessary, to protect special areas (e.g. Rhode Island Natural Heritage Program sites), and allow for development in existing developed areas to build tax revenue to purchase more open space.

Protection of remaining farmland can be accomplished by: Encouraging applications for reduced property assessments under the Farm, Forest and Open Space Act. Martin's Dairy Farm (right) located on Woonsocket Hill Rd is especially picturesque.



Aside from land protection, the town will remain open to new farming techniques on micro-scale such as hydroponics or vertical farming.

### Wildlife Protection

While some invasive species have thrived in developed areas, most wildlife, birds and plant populations are vulnerable to multiple threats associated with human activity. Some threats include:

- Residential and commercial development
- Natural systems modification
- Invasive species
- Pollution
- Severe weather
- Human intrusion and disturbance

A primary threat to Rhode Island's fish, wildlife, and their habitats is conversion of land by human development for housing, urban areas, commercial, industrial, and recreational uses. Forest plants and animals are disrupted by development and roads. Protecting land and water remains the most effective, long-lasting, and essential tool for conserving habitats.

Map 10 contains information pertinent to wildlife protection. Non-state conservation lands are real property permanently protected from future development by recognized land protection organizations other than the State of Rhode Island. Natural Heritage areas are areas of estimated habit and ranges of rare species and noteworthy natural communities. The forest habitat layer on the map is derived from land-use and land-cover data enhanced by existing forest datasets, shrubland data and data classified manually.

### North Smithfield Land Development and Subdivision Regulations (LDSR)

Conservation Development is a land use technique that allows a community to guide growth to the most appropriate areas within a parcel of land to minimize negative impacts to the environment

and preserve community character. In the LDSR under Article IV Special Requirements, Article 4.1 Conservation Developments was created for those reasons.

Within Article V Design Standards in the LDSR, Article 5.1 Land Unsuitable for Development land deemed unhealthy for residential purposes, according to the Planning Board and consultation with the DEM’s OWTS Section will not be approved for subdivision. The LDSR section is governed by the provisions of Section 5.5.3 of the North Smithfield Zoning Ordinance.

### Stormwater Management

North Smithfield will continue to follow and implement the standards and regulations in the RIDEM/Rhode Island Coastal Resources Council. MS4s (Small Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems) are required to submit an Annual Report documenting progress made towards achieving the requirements of the Rhode Island Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (RIPDES) program, as well as reporting on ongoing maintenance of their stormwater system.

### Conservation Commission

The North Smithfield Conservation Commission was created for promoting natural resources, protecting watershed resources, and preserving natural esthetic areas of the town. The commission currently oversees several properties including the Cedar Swamp Conservation Area and Monica’s Garden (see table below).

The Commission recommends programs for better municipal promotion, development, utilization or preservation of open areas, streams, shores, wooded areas, roadsides, swamps, marshlands and natural esthetic areas. The Commission was instrumental in obtaining gifts of land, most notably 69.5 acres abutting Route 146 near the Greenville Road exit (Cedar Swamp Conservation Area).

Property	Location	Size	Map/Lot	Use
Monica's Garden	151 Mendon Road	10 acres	003/007	Conservation area/park consisting of a grassy area with 2 picnic tables, a walking trail with several benches, flowers, and ornamental and unusual shrubs and trees. There is a well-preserved stone wall along the road and approximately 100 feet of split rail fence. Wildlife living on or passing through include deer, foxes, coyotes, raccoons, and many bird species.
Cedar Swamp Conservation Area	off route 146 and Greenville Rd.	69.5 acres	009/163, 165, 012/002, 003, 004, 005, 006, 013, 256, 181	Freshwater wetlands and forest off route 146 and Greenville Rd. It is accessible and is home to wildlife including rabbits, raccoons, foxes, fishers, deer, turkey, hawks and waterfowl as well as amphibians, reptiles and insects. Town-owned and managed by the North Smithfield Conservation Commission



Monica's Garden

Source: North Smithfield Conservation Commission



Cedar Swamp Conservation Area

Source: North Smithfield Conservation Commission website

### North Smithfield Land Trust

North Smithfield Land Trust is a private, non-profit corporation whose function is to preserve and protect natural resources in North Smithfield. The Trust encourages cooperation in the protection of the beauty of the land and natural resources. Four properties owned by the trust are available for passive recreation, birding and hiking (see table below)

Property	Location	Size	Use
Booth Pond Property	East of Dowling Village	40 acres mixed wetlands, woodlands and Booth Pond	Walking, birding, hiking
Rocky Hill Property	South of Rocky Hill Rd #431, borders Woonsocket Reservoir #3	22 acres mixed wetlands and woodlands	Birding, walking, hiking
Mattity Rd Property	West of Mattity Rd and Black Plain Rd intersection	17 acres wetlands and woodlands	Birding, hiking

Village Way Property	Past the Meadows subdivision at 2 Village Way.	42 acres fields, woodlands, bogs and rocky outcroppings	Passive recreation
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The picture below shows the 17-acre parcel on Mattity Road at the headwater region of the Woonasquatucket River. Protecting the headwaters ensures the water stays pristine further downstream. The Land Trust and the Town of North Smithfield were recently jointly awarded an Open Space Grant for 40 acres of conservation land near and including half of Booth Pond. The grant will ensure that nearly three quarters of the area around Booth Pond is protected; half is already protected by Woonsocket’s Booth Pond Conservation Area. The grant will also protect a globally endangered dragonfly, along with countless other species that rely on the rare wetland habitat type.



Source: North Smithfield Land Trust Website

### Conservation Easements

Conservation easements have been used throughout Rhode Island to protect the value and special character of the land in perpetuity. Using conservation easements, special plant and animal populations as well as water resources, are protected and development is prevented that would conflict with the maintenance of the current, natural, scenic and open condition of the property. They are an effective way to promote growth while minimizing impacts to the environment and community character.

### Transfer of Development Rights (TDR)

Transfer of Development Rights is a tool that can enable North Smithfield to transfer development rights from rural areas to urban areas. Large lot sizes cause fragmentation and loss of critical habitat areas. TDR encourages the use of smaller lot sizes within village settings where services are close to where residents live.

### Rhode Island Wildlife Action Plan (RI WAP)

The RI WAP is a comprehensive plan developed by a collaboration of the Nature Conservancy, The University of Rhode Island and the RI DEM to conserve and protect wildlife. The document presents a framework for wildlife management, for decision-making and for protecting species that have been identified as in the greatest need of conservation. This is an exhaustive document that should be used by the Town to protect wildlife and establish habitat as a priority for preservation.

#### Contaminated sites of North Smithfield

A list of all contaminated sites in North Smithfield can be found on page 45 of the following link:  
<http://www.dem.ri.gov/programs/benviron/waste/pdf/cercstat.pdf>

Goals	Policies	Actions
1. Natural resource systems, wetlands, wildlife habitats, and groundwater aquifers, will be protected.	1.a. Limit development in environmentally sensitive and rural areas in accordance with zoning policy.	1.a.1. Determine compatible land uses and develop land acquisition and management programs to identify open space and river corridors.
		1.a.2. Protect existing natural environments and mitigate impacts of proposed development on those environments.
		1.a.3. Require peer review of master plans for large developments.
2. Maintain rural character in concert with concisely-located development or redevelopment of existing areas.	2.a. Encourage urban infill development as a means of protecting rural areas from development.	2.a.1. Support the ZBR when practical regarding applications of legal-nonconformance.
	2.b. Support integrated strategies to protect natural systems in rural areas while encouraging desirable growth adjacent to road systems of adequate carrying capacity.	2.b.1. Coordinate with Economic Development initiatives to preserve large tracts of undeveloped land by allowing for growth along major arterial roadways.
		2.b.2. Strive to permanently protect the preservation lots listed on Map 1 through fee simple or development rights purchase, or conservation easement protections.
3. Respect the Town’s significant ground water resources for future use and benefit of the Town.	3.a Protect prime, undeveloped groundwater aquifers and recharge areas from excessive development.	3.a.1 Investigate alternatives such as packaged wastewater treatment facilities to those developed areas impacting groundwater resources.
		3.a.2. Encourage development in existing industrial areas where bmps can be implemented to protect water quality.
		3.a.3. Require the use of properly designed and maintained OWTS especially in areas with highly permeable soils (generally associated with groundwater reservoirs);

		encourage DEM to remain vigilant in making sure that necessary OWTS maintenance contracts remain in place.
		3.a.4. Develop better lines of communication between RIDEM and EPA regarding Superfund sites near the Slatersville Aquifer.
	3.b. Protect the Town's surface water resources with emphasis on the Slatersville and Woonsocket Reservoirs, and Blackstone watershed.	3.b.1. Maintain strong enforcement of development regulations within reservoir drainage areas under the presumption that the town needs to improve water quality from the current B status.
		3.b.2. Encourage the Town of Burrillville to consider land use and development impacts relating to downstream areas such as the Slatersville Reservoir.
	3.c. Adopt and implement programs to protect natural resources and conservation areas through acquisition, conservation easements and other measures.	3.c.1. Ensure that the timing of peak flows from new development is designed to minimize downstream flooding especially in flood prone watersheds such as Cherry Brook.
	4.a. Protect prime farmland and farmlands of statewide importance with emphasis on those areas actively used for farming.	4.a.1. Recommend zoning changes to allow more low impact use that will keep farms economically feasible.
	5.a. Protect forestland of statewide importance with emphasis on those areas actively in Farm, Forest, Open Space.	5.a.1. Use a cooperative approach between the Town, State, and private organizations to identify, plan for, and protect valuable and ecologically sensitive forestland from development in critical areas.
		5.a.2. Conserve and enhance forests to support water quality, forest products, water supply and wildlife habitat.
	6.a. Consider protecting natural resources for the	6.a.1. Maintain the Town GIS and utilize it to identify environmentally sensitive areas

	benefit of local needs for the Town.	and potential conservation areas and opportunities.
		6.a.2. Encourage the practice of forest management planning to promote healthy forests.